

Jawad Hanif

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Professor Akassi,

Anti-Racist or Not Racist: How to end Racism?

The United States of America is recognized as a country filled with opportunities, and the Great American Dream was not a myth but a reality. However, as people look back at the country's history, as much as they would feel the pride of having their ancestors fighting for the freedom of their people or being the founders of the Industrial Revolution, they will also feel the discomfort of learning about the history of slavery.

Today, the United States of America has come a long way when discussing social justice and human rights issues. America was able to elect its first African American president as well. However, racism persists in the country. This essay looks to understand the issue of human rights from the book's perspective, "How to be an Anti-racist." Ibram X. Kendi writes it talks about how being an anti-racist is the only way that racism can end. Kendi believes that it is not productive for the community itself that a person takes a neutral stance as this is not enough to end such a significant problem prevailing in the country's different institutions and systems. The thesis of this writing is that it is essential for the people who consider themselves not to be racist to take anti-racist actions. A criminal will not be convicted simply if a witness chooses to resent him and do nothing against him.

It is essential to understand the history of the human rights issue in the United States of America. Even before the US came into existence, racism was prevalent between the natives and the colonizers. The reasons for this are that the latter would not tolerate a community or group of people living and sharing a land when their values and ways of living are different. This can be

considered the foundation of racism on the American continent. Furthermore, when the United States of America achieved the industrial revolution, slavery was rampant as many Africans were kidnapped and sold in the United States. Every rich man in the country enslaved people (Chaney 489). They would be given the worst conditions to live in; they were deprived of clothes and proper food. They would be whipped and other forms of violence if they defied their "masters," and killing them, was not considered a crime. There was some improvement regarding the human rights issues in the early 19th century.

However, it again became worse, and this time racism happened through other means. The Great Depression had put the country into anarchy and desperation for jobs, and the African Americans faced the worst of this as they were not given jobs or any way of earning based on their color. Only during the 1960s that the marginalization of the African Americans in proper countries like Chicago lead to the birth of leaders like Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. They were the ones that led the Civil Rights Movement. Through the blood, torture, and deaths of many African Americans, proper amendments were made to the constitution to help the human rights of the African American community (Morabia 1312).

This would have seemed that the issue had ended here, but that is not the case, as even today, there are diverse ways in which racism is still prevailing. There are still some people in the country that make their decision on the basis of one's race and color. This can range from educational intuitions to jobs being offered in the country. In the book "How to be an Anti-racist," author Kendi is an African American himself. However, at the start of his writing, he states that he agreed with many racist ideologies. He states that he used to believe that the Black people were responsible for what had happened to them. This was because there was a prevalent belief in the country that even though the Civil Rights Movement was able to complete

its objective, the African Americans had to suffer for entire centuries instead of standing up for themselves. This was a racist ideology that was being spread by the White Supremacists of the time. In every chapter of the book, Kendi, talks about various aspects of racism and how they affect the African American community today. There is a part in the book titled "Definitions" in which he talked about the meaning of different terms like racist policies and ideas. This set of words was taught to him by his parents, and it is considered a tool many people in the country use to suppress the African community.

In this writing, Kendi has made it clear that there is only one way that society's human rights can be protected, and that is through anti-racist ideology. Many people in America consider themselves not racist. However, Kendi is targeting these people in his writing and is stating that being neutral is just a way to excuse one from their role to do better for society. "The opposite of 'racist' is not 'not racist.' It is 'anti-racist'" (Kendi 9). With this sentence as the crux of the entire book, Kendi differentiates between the people who are not racist themselves and those who are fighting against it. He believes that the latter are playing their part in leading the society towards a much more ideology.

The author, in his writing, makes another fascinating point. He states that the people endorsing the culture of color blindness are also not playing a substantial part in the betterment of the community. It is essential to understand that colors cannot be ignored regardless of what people think. No matter how much the community tries, the whites and Black people cannot simply let go of their history (Garcia 121). It is essential to take a different stance. Some people are endorsing the idea of the possibility of a post-racial world to help in decreasing it. Kendi believes that these people are also wrong with their fighting strategy. People will not change their thinking based on the possibility and assumption of something when there is no solid evidence.

Today, the African community faces many challenges, like not getting the same quality of education in their neighborhood compared to a white-dominated neighborhood. Moreover, the number of people convicted in prison has a higher average of African descent than any other race. This means that even though the ideologies of slavery are not direct, the fascist philosophies are still embedded in the country's system, which is why even though many people in the United States of America speak against racism, there is still a long way to go.

Kendi also talked about the mental implications of racism in his writing. "Racist ideas make people of color think less of themselves, which makes them more vulnerable to racist ideas" (Kendi 6). In this extract, the author is putting focuses on how ideas can be perilous for a community. Those labeled a stereotype because of their color start feeling threatened by their color and face. This leads to low self-esteem and loss of confidence, which can entirely ruin a person's career. This is human psychology, which is when a person feels discomfort about something, and others repeat the same thing repeatedly, they become more and more conscious about it (Tourse 66).

There is another example of how racism affects the community, and this is done by comparing African Americans and White people. "One of racism's harms is the way it falls on the unexceptional Black person who is asked to be extraordinary just to survive—and, even worse, the Black screwup who faces the abyss after one error, while the White screwup is handed second chances and empathy" (Kendi 93). Kendi based this quote on his experiences. In the case of a young African American boy involved in drugs or crime, the law would find it difficult to allow him a second chance. A white kid, however, would be given a second chance if the same thing happened to him. The author considers such forms of contrast to be the reason the Black community was suppressed for so long, even after slavery was eradicated (Sewel 495).

In conclusion, it is quite clear that racism is still a pretty common issue in the United States. Ibram Kendi's book has made this obvious, and it shows how there are diverse ways in which the African American community was suppressed into thriving without them even knowing. If the people choose to be colorblind or only justify their righteousness by calling themselves not racist, such problems will not be solved. Anti-racist ideology must prevail. The thesis of this writing stands true that it is crucial for the people who consider themselves not to be racist to take anti-racist actions. A criminal will not be convicted simply if a witness chooses to resent him and do nothing against him.

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